

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A method for processing and tracking requests for leave under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) using a web-based computer system configured with at least one server which includes an employee FMLA database, the system including ~~at least one~~ a plurality of client system systems networked to the ~~servers~~ at least one server, said method comprising the steps of:

displaying on a first client system at least one web page including a FMLA leave request form;

prompting a requester to enter request data directly into the FMLA leave request form, the requester includes at least one of an employee of an employer included within the FMLA and a representative of the employee, the request data includes information relating to a reason for a FMLA leave request, the employee and the employer, the first client system is associated with the requester;

automatically uploading the ~~an initial~~ FMLA leave request form with the request data from the first client system to the server, the server is associated with the employer;

determining, at the server, whether the employee is eligible to receive a conditional approval of the FMLA leave request form;

automatically downloading a the conditional approval from the server to the employee first client system for viewing by the requester;

automatically downloading the conditional approval and a medical certification form to a second client system associated with a ~~named~~ medical provider identified by the requester;

prompting the medical provider to enter medical data directly into the medical certification form displayed on the second client system, the medical data includes a recommendation relating to the reason for the FMLA leave request;

automatically uploading a completed medical certification form from the second client system to the server for storage in the FMLA database;

~~checking the completed medical provider form for a recommendation from a medical care provider; and~~

comparing, at the server, the request data to the medical data to determine whether the reason provided by the requester for the FMLA leave request corresponds with the recommendation provided by the medical provider; and

downloading from the server a final approval or disapproval to the employee requester at the first client system.

2. (original) A method according to Claim 1 further comprising the step of tracking employee leaves, leave requests, and leave time remaining for employees under the FMLA.

3. (currently amended) A method according to Claim 1 wherein said step of automatically uploading ~~an initial~~ the FMLA leave request form further comprises the step of uploading employee personal data and employee company data.

4. (currently amended) A method according to Claim 1 wherein said step of automatically uploading ~~an initial~~ the FMLA leave request form further comprises the step of uploading a reason for the requested medical leave.

5. (currently amended) A method according to Claim 1 wherein said step of automatically uploading ~~an initial~~ the FMLA leave request form further comprises the step of uploading a type of medical leave requested.

6. (currently amended) A method according to Claim 1 wherein said step of automatically uploading ~~an initial~~ the FMLA leave request form further comprises the step of completing the form on the requesting employees behalf.

7. (currently amended) A method according to Claim 1 wherein said step of automatically uploading a completed medical certification form further comprises the step of

uploading a recommendation from the medical provider relating to the reason for the requested medical leave.

8. (currently amended) A method according to Claim 7 wherein said step of uploading a recommendation from the medical provider relating to the reason for the requested medical leave further comprises the step of uploading a type of medical leave deemed appropriate by a medical care provider.

9. (currently amended) A method according to Claim 1 wherein said step of automatically uploading a completed medical certification form further comprises the step of uploading medical care provider recommended dates and times for a leave.

10. (currently amended) A method according to Claim 1 wherein said step of automatically uploading a completed medical certification form further comprises the step of uploading a signature stamp of a medical care provider.

11. (currently amended) A method according to Claim 1 wherein said step of automatically uploading ~~an initial~~ the FMLA leave request form further comprises the step of accepting FMLA leave request information over a telephone by at least one of a voice responsive system where a user enters spoken FMLA information and a menu system where a user enters requested FMLA information using the touch keys of a telephone.

12. (currently amended) A method according to Claim 1 wherein said step of automatically uploading a completed medical certification form further comprises the step of accepting FMLA information over a telephone by at least one of a voice responsive system where a medical care provider enters spoken FMLA recommendation information and a menu system where a medical care provider enters an FMLA recommendation using the touch keys of a telephone.

13. (currently amended) A system for facilitating processing and tracking of requests under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), said system comprising:

at least one a first computer associated with a requester, the requester includes at least one of an employee of an employer included within the FMLA and a representative of the employee;

a second computer associated with a medical provider identified by the requester;

at least one server associated with the employer further comprising:

an employee FMLA request database; and

a plurality of FMLA forms designed to accept data relating to a request for a leave under the FMLA; and

a network connecting said servers to said computers; and, said server configured to:

a user interface allowing a requester to download said forms and input data relating to a request for a leave under the FMLA.

display on the first computer the plurality of said forms including a FMLA leave request form,

prompt the requester to enter request data directly into the FMLA leave request form including information relating to a reason for a FMLA leave request, the employee and the employer,

receive the FMLA leave request form with the leave data from the first computer,

determine whether the employee is eligible to receive a conditional approval of the FMLA leave request form,

automatically download the conditional approval to the first computer for viewing by the requester,

automatically download the conditional approval and a medical certification form to the second computer,

prompt the medical provider to enter medical data directly into the medical certification form displayed on the second computer, the medical data includes a recommendation relating to the reason for the FMLA leave request,

receive a completed medical certification form from the second computer for storage in the FMLA database,

compare the request data to the medical data to determine whether the reason provided by the requester for the FMLA leave request corresponds with the recommendation provided by the medical provider, and

download a final approval or disapproval to the requester at the first computer.

14. (original) A system according to Claim 13 wherein said servers and said computers are configured to allow the requester to submit the leave request via the Internet.

15. (original) A system according to Claim 13 wherein said servers and said computers are configured to allow the requester to submit the leave request via an Intranet.

16. (original) A system according to Claim 13 wherein said network is one of a wide area network and a local area network.

17. (original) A system according to Claim 13 wherein at least one of said servers is further configured to track employee leaves, leave requests, and leave time remaining for employees under the FMLA.

18. (original) A system according to Claim 13 wherein at least one of said servers is further configured to upload and store in said database employee leave requests.

19. (original) A system according to Claim 18 wherein at least one of said servers is further configured to upload and store employee personal data and employee company data.

20. (original) A system according to Claim 18 wherein at least one of said servers is further configured to upload and store a reason for the requested medical leave.

21. (original) A system according to Claim 18 wherein at least one of said servers is further configured to upload and store a type of medical leave requested.

22. (original) A system according to Claim 18 wherein at least one of said servers is further configured to allow a third person to upload a leave request form on the requesting employees behalf.

23. (original) A system according to Claim 13 wherein at least one of said servers is further configured to upload a completed medical certification form.

24. (original) A system according to Claim 23 wherein at least one of said servers is further configured to upload a reason for the requested medical leave.

25. (original) A system according to Claim 24 wherein at least one of said servers is further configured to upload a type of medical leave deemed appropriate by a medical care provider.

26. (original) A system according to Claim 23 wherein at least one of said servers is further configured to upload medical care provider recommended dates and times for a leave.

27. (original) A system according to Claim 23 wherein at least one of said servers is further configured to upload a signature stamp of a medical care provider.

28. (original) A system according to Claim 13 wherein at least one of said servers is configured to download a medical certification form to a named medical care provider.

29. (original) A system according to Claim 13 wherein at least one of said servers is configured to send to an employee at least one of a conditional approval and a medical certification form to an employee requesting leave.

30. (original) A system according to Claim 13 wherein at least one of said servers is configured to accept FMLA leave request information over a telephone by at least one of a voice responsive system where a user enters spoken FMLA information and a menu system where a user enters requested FMLA information using the touch keys of a telephone.

31. (original) A system according to Claim 13 wherein at least one of said servers is configured to accept FMLA information over a telephone by at least one of a voice responsive system where a medical care provider enters spoken FMLA recommendation information and a menu system where a medical care provider enters an FMLA recommendation using the touch keys of a telephone.

32. (currently amended) A method for determining if an employee is entitled to leave under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) using a web-based computer system including a server having a database and a plurality of client systems networked to the server, said method comprising the steps of:

automatically downloading a conditional approval from the server to a first client system, the server is associated with an employer included within the FMLA and the first client system is associated with an employee of the employer;

automatically downloading forwarding a the conditional approval and a medical certification form to the employee a second client system, the second client system is associated with a medical provider identified by the employee;

upon receipt of the completed medical provider form at the server, reviewing the form for a recommendation from a medical care provider; and

downloading forwarding a final approval or disapproval to the first client system for review by the employee.

33. (currently amended) A method according to Claim 32 wherein said step of ~~forwarding~~ automatically downloading a conditional approval to a first client system the employee further comprises the step of tracking employee leaves, leave requests and verifying the employee has remaining FMLA leave time.

34. (original) A method according to Claim 32 further comprising the step of forwarding the medical certification form to a medical care provider.

35. (canceled)

36. (currently amended) Apparatus for processing and tracking of requests under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), comprising:

means for storing a plurality of FMLA forms;

means for displaying on a first client system at least one FMLA form including a FMLA leave request form;

means for prompting a requester to enter request data directly into the FMLA leave request form, the requester includes at least one of an employee of an employer included within the FMLA and a representative of the employee, the request data includes information relating to a reason for a FMLA leave request, the employee and the employer, the first client system is associated with the requester;

means for automatically uploading the FMLA leave request form with the request data from the first client system to a server, the server is associated with the employer;

means for determining whether the employee is eligible to receive a conditional approval of the FMLA leave request form;

means for automatically downloading the conditional approval from the server to the first client system;

means for automatically downloading the conditional approval and a medical certification form to a second client system associated with a medical provider identified by the requester;

means for prompting the medical provider to enter medical data directly into the medical certification form displayed on the second client system, the medical data includes a recommendation relating to the reason for the FMLA leave request;

means for automatically uploading a completed medical certification form from the second client system to the server for storage;



means for comparing the request data to the medical data to determine whether the reason provided by the requester for the FMLA leave request corresponds with the recommendation provided by the medical provider; and

means for downloading from the server a final approval or disapproval to the requester at the first client system.

~~means for allowing a requester to download said forms and input data relating to a request for a leave under the FMLA; and~~

~~means for storing employee FMLA requests.~~

37. (currently amended) Apparatus according to Claim 36 wherein said means for storing a plurality of FMLA forms ~~and said means for storing employee FMLA requests~~ comprises at least one server.

38. (original) Apparatus according to Claim 37 wherein said servers is further configured to track employee leaves, leave requests, and leave time remaining for employees under the FMLA.

39. (canceled)

40. (currently amended) A computer program embodied on a computer readable medium for processing and tracking requests for leave under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), said program comprising a code segment that:

~~a plurality of FMLA forms;~~

~~a record of employee FMLA requests; and~~

~~a record of whether said employee FMLA requests have been approved or denied.~~

displays on a first client system at least one web page including a FMLA leave request form;

prompts a requester to enter request data directly into the FMLA leave request form, the requester includes at least one of an employee of an employer included within the FMLA and a representative of the employee, the request data includes information relating to a reason for a FMLA leave request, the employee and the employer, the first client system is associated with the requester;

automatically uploads the FMLA leave request form with the request data from the first client system to the server, the server is associated with the employer;

determines whether the employee is eligible to receive a conditional approval of the FMLA leave request form;

automatically downloads the conditional approval from the server to the first client system for viewing by the requester;

automatically downloads the conditional approval and a medical certification form to a second client system associated with a medical provider identified by the requester;

prompts the medical provider to enter medical data directly into the medical certification form displayed on the second client system, the medical data includes a recommendation relating to the reason for the FMLA leave request;

automatically uploads a completed medical certification form from the second client system to the server for storage in the FMLA database;

compares the request data to the medical data to determine whether the reason provided by the requester for the FMLA leave request corresponds with the recommendation provided by the medical provider; and

downloads from the server a final approval or disapproval to the requester at the first client system.

41. (original) A computer readable medium according to Claim 40 further comprising employee personal data and employee company data.

42. (original) A computer readable medium according to Claim 40 further comprising a record of a reason for the requested medical leave.

43. (original) A computer readable medium according to Claim 40 further comprising a record of completed medical certification forms.

44. (new) A method for requesting leave from an employer under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) using a web-based computer system including a server having a database and a plurality of client systems networked to the server, said method comprising the steps of:

displaying on a first client system at least one web page including a FMLA leave request form, the first client system is associated with an employee of an employer included within the FMLA;

automatically uploading the FMLA leave request form from the first client system to the server after the employee has entered request data into the FMLA leave request form, the server is associated with the employer;

automatically downloading a medical certification form to a second client system associated with a medical provider identified by the employee;

automatically uploading a completed medical certification form from the second client system to the server; and

downloading from the server a final approval or disapproval to the first client system based on the completed medical certification form.